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# DIVINE LIFE

—DEVOTED TO THEOSOPHY—

## The Sacred Science

OF

## The Evolution of the Ego

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FEBRUARY, 1930

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# THE DIVINE LIFE

## The Pioneer Magazine of the Sixth Race

Whose Invisible Editor is the Conqueror on the white horse—the new Initiate in his solar body.

The CONQUEROR—to him I shall award to eat (the fruit) of the tree of life which is in the middle of the Garden of the God.

The award to the CONQUEROR, is the Eternal Memory: he shall eat the fruit of the tree of life (the fruitage of the life cycle) in the God's own abiding place, the mystical paradise or state of ineffable bliss.

The award to the CONQUEROR is conscious Immortality; he is to wear the crown of life, and nothing that originates in the soul-consciousness shall pass into the oblivion of the second death.

THE CONQUEROR—to him I shall award to eat a share of the hidden manna and I shall award to him a white voting-pebble, and on the voting pebble (will be) a new name engraved, which no one knows but he who receives it.

THE CONQUEROR—he shall be clothed in white garments, and I shall not at all erase his name from the book of life, but I shall acknowledge his name before my Father and before his Divinities.

THE CONQUEROR shall not at all be punished by the second death. He who has an ear to hear, let him hear.

# Divine Life

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# The Seal of the United States,

**(REVERSE SIDE)**

**Annuit Coeptis,**

**Prosper us in our undertaking."**

**Novus Ordo Seclorum,**

**"A New System of Ethics will arise."**

*DIVINE LIFE*

*(THE NEW ORDER OF AGES)*

# The Independent Theosophical Society of America!

(INCORPORATED)

**Founded, December 20, 1914.**

**By Celestia Root Lang.**

PRESIDENT FOR LIFE: HARRY E. RICHEIMER, Editor and Publisher of the DIVINE LIFE, the Official Organ of THE INDEPENDENT THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, maintained by and in the interest of the INDEPENDENT THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA.

Chairman, SECRETARY AND TREASURER: Harry R. Lang, appointed by the President.

Dues for one year's membership in THE INDEPENDENT THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA, $2.00, which includes one year's subscription to the DIVINE LIFE MAGAZINE.

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*There is as much fraud and deception enacted on the physical plane among the Orthodox denominations to capture the Soul of Man religiously, as there is fraud and deception exercised on the outside or unseen plane over which these so-called MASTERS hold an iron sway to capture him occultly.*

*When a man is strong enough to evade his captors on these two planes, the seen and the unseen, then is he ready to stand alone, be his own Master and become his own GOD.*

# The Divine Life

A MONTHLY MIRROR OF THE SOUL

HARRY E. RICHEIMER
Editor and Publisher
536 So. Clark St.., Chicago, Ill.
Room 978

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VOL. XXIV CHICAGO, ILL., FEBRUARY, 1930 No. 4

## THE GREAT MASTER

### Your Own Higher Self

AND remember, no other Master, big or little, great or small, inside or outside the body, will be accepted by The Independent Theosophical Society of America, of America and not of India, Thibet or Ceylon.

Much has been said and is being said today about this arcane school of Masters, Mahatmas or Adepts inside and outside the Theosophical Society known to the lay mind as "THE GREAT WHITE LODGE," which is being used to mystify and glamour, but we want you to know that the main object of these deceivers is to impede your progress along the Path and side-track you, so to say, from ever attaining Union with your own Higher Self. For when that is attained you need no more instruction, for you are then yourself the object of your search, the voice unbroken that resounds throughout the Ages: "THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE."

Why, you may ask do Societies representing themselves as Theosophical and Rosicrucian give out literature that is taken from the Ancient Vedas, the Brahmanical Scriptures, the Pali and Greek texts covering the Gnostic Teaching which leads man to his inner God consciousness and simultaneously try to throw over the student the second garment woven of astral formation and deception. The literature in question advises him to "stand alone and be your own Master," for by your own power alone can you ever hope to gain the heights celestial. And immediately thereafter the Head and wiseacre of these organizations carefully informs the new member that these teachings are all right as far as they go, but to come into contact with these GREAT MASTERS of the GREAT WHITE LODGE you must enlist or become a member of some Esoteric School where the main secrets of Initiation and Spiritual advancement are given out and degrees conferred; for bear in mind to come into contact with the GREAT MASTERS is the highest you can ever hope to attain in this incarnation and to be a mere chela or lay chela should make you feel a privileged being for which you should indeed feel grateful and thankful that you have been so unduly elevated.

This teaching, Brothers, coming from these accredited Societies is only another ruse of the Hierarchy of Darkness and Deception which controls millions of Souls in the Orthodox group, Catholic and Protestant alike to control all Souls who aspire for the Light in Occult Orders and Societies who aspire to reach the Truth through the study of the ancient doctrine known as the WISDOM RELIGION. They never want you to rely solely alone on your own initiative and on your own guidance, but warn you that you must have a

Guru or Master *outside yourself* belonging to some exalted Great Lodge that operates above and beyond you to help you out.

This Master business which formed the keystone of the arch of the Theosophical Society at its inception when Madame Blavatsky grew to be the dominating head and figure was the main cause of its failure at its outset and its failure ever since. For Blavatsky, who was a medium and an occultist (but never a Theosophist) who loved to dabble in mystery, occult lore, magic and astral deception, saw at the outset that if the Society were to proceed along other lines than her own and deal solely with *noumena* or purely abstract philosophical course of the study of the ancient comparative Religions, her astral business, her Messages from these purported Masters of Wisdom, her phenomena, her deception and glamour must be laid aside and this is just what the Madame didn't want. She wanted to exhibit her marvelous powers of the psychic realm to gain recognition of the Theosophical Society throughout the World and act as some barker at a circus side show who gives a little exhibition on the outside of the canvas before the show begins.

Well, the Madame succeeded in having her own way with Col. Olcott and the rest who regarded her more as a prodigy and monstrosity and representative of these GREAT MASTERS OF WISDOM. William Q. Judge, Madame Blavatsky's right hand man, says of these exalted Masters in his "Echoes from the Orient."

Pp. 25. "It is well now to say, more definitely than I have as yet, a few words of the two classes of beings, one of whom has been much spoken of in Theosophical literature, and also by those on the outside who write

of the subject either in seriousness or in ridicule. These two classes of exalted personages are the Mahatmas and Nirmanakayas.

"In respect to the Mahatmas, a great many wrong notions have currency, not only with the public, but as well with Theosophists in all parts of the world. In the early days of the Theosophical Society the name Mahatma was not in use here, but the title then was "Brothers." This referred to the fact that they were a band of men who belonged to a brotherhood in the East. The most wonderful powers and at times the most extraordinary motives were attributed to them by those who believed in their existence.

"They could pass to all parts of the world in the twinkling of an eye. Across the great distance that India is from here they could precipitate letters to their friends and disciples in New York. Many thought that if this were done it was only for amusement; others looked at it in the light of a test for the faithful, while still others often supposed Mahatmas acted thus for pure love of exercising their power. The Spiritualists, some of whom believed that Mme. Blavatsky really did the wonderful things told of her, said that she was only a medium, pure and simple, and that her Brothers were familiar spooks of seance rooms. Meanwhile the press in general laughed, and Mme. Blavatsky and her Theosophical friends went on doing their work and never gave up their belief in the Brothers, who after a few years came to be called Mahatmas. Indiscriminately with Mahatmas the word Adept has been used to describe the same beings, so that we have these two titles made use of without accuracy and in a misleading fashion.

The word Adept signifies proficiency, and is not un-

common, so that, when using it, some description is necessary if it is to be applied to the Brothers. For that reason I used Theosophical Adepts in a previous paper. A Mahatma is not only an Adept, but much more. The etymology of it will make the matter clearer, the word being strictly Sanskrit, from maha, great, and atma, soul—hence Greal Soul. This does not mean a noble-hearted man merely, but a perfected being, one who has attained to the state often described by mystics and held by scientific men to be an impossibility, when time and space are no obstacles to sight, to action, to knowledge or to consciousness. Hence they are said to be able to perform the extraordinary feats related by various persons, and also to possess information of a decidedly practical character concerning the laws of nature, including that mystery for science—the meaning, operation and constitution of life itself—and concerning the genesis of this planet as well as the races upon it. These large claims have given rise to the chief complaint brought forward against the Theosophical Adepts by those writers outside of the Society who have taken the subject up—that they remain, if they exist at all, in a state of cold and selfish quietude, seeing the misery and hearing the groans of the world, yet refusing to hold out a helping hand except to a favored few; possessing knowledge of scientific principles or of medicinal preparations, and yet keeping it back from learned men or wealthy capitalists who desire to advance commerce while they turn an honest penny. Although, for one, I firmly believe, upon evidence given me, in all that is claimed for these Adepts, I declare groundless the complaint advanced, knowing it to be due to a want of knowledge of those who are impugned.

Adepts and Mahatmas are not a miraculous growth, nor the selfish successors of some who, accidentally stumbling upon great truths, transmitted them to adherents, under patent rights. They are human beings trained, developed, cultivated through not only a life but long series of lives, always under evolutionary laws and quite in accord with what we see among men of the world of science. Just as a Tyndall is greater than a savage, though still a man, so is the Mahatma, not ceasing to be human, still greater than a Tyndall. The Mahatma-Adept is a natural growth, and not produced by any miracle; the process by which he so becomes may be to us an unfamiliar one, but is in the strict order of nature.

"Some years ago a well-known Anglo-Indian, writing to the Theosophical Adepts, queried if they had ever made any mark upon the web of history, doubting that they had. The reply was that he had no bar at which to arraign them, and that they had written many an important line upon the page of human life, not only as reigning in visible shape, but down to the very latest dates when, as for many a long century before, they did their work behind the scenes. To be more explicit, these wonderful men have swayed the destiny of nations and are shaping events today. Pillars of peace and makers of war such as Bismarck, or saviors of nations such as Washington, Lincoln and Grant owe their elevation, their singular power and their astonishing grasp upon the right men for their purposes, not to trained intellect or long preparation in the schools of their day, but to these very unseen ADEPTS, who crave no honors, seek no publicity and claim no acknowledgment. Each one of these great human leaders whom I have mentioned had in his ob-

scure years what he called premonitions of future greatness, or connection with stirring events in his native land." (If what Mr. Judge says is true, why in goodness name haven't the ADEPTS done more at home in the Theosophical Society which is supposed to be under their direct guidance and created men and leaders who amounted to something instead of a horde of phenomena hunters, psychic flounderers and sensation mongers?)

Now in the light of the foregoing how could any new student entering the Theosophical Society handed the three Theosophical manuals: "Voice of the Silence," "The Bhagavad Gita," and "Light on the Path," which regards Union with the Higher Self through one's own efforts as the *summun bonum* of Spiritual aspiration and Spiritual attainment ever expect to be able to reconcile the two opposite teachings? The MASTER teaching as purely occult untheosophical, autocratic and devilish; and the book teaching or Higher Self teaching as purely Theosophical, Spiritual, democratic and holy; and this dear reader is the real cause of the disintegration of the Theosophical Society from its inception. The occult bug got into the golden fruit and drilled its way to the core and drank its life sap; and today Annie Besant, Leadbeater, Chas. Johnston, Madame Tingley and a score of other Leaders are the victims of this occult band of highway robbers who in turn, sell the Souls of their victims to the Devils who are supposed to guide the Evolution of the Race from a higher standpoint than our human understanding.

Had Masters been left out of the whole business at the start, and Mdme. Blavatsky and her band of parasites and thieves (for that is all they are) ejected from

the Society in 1875, the Theosophical Society of America today would have outstripped Christian Science, New Thought and staid old Orthodoxy itself, which structure is crumbling before our very eyes.

This, then, is the object of The Independent Theosophical Society of America. To give out an American Theosophy for Americans where Madame Blavatsky and the GREAT MASTERS of the GREAT WHITE LODGE are simply taboo and rank foolishness, foreign to our original objects to establish the Universal Brotherhood of the Races through Spiritual advancement and not to be retarded by astral foolishness and hypnotic glamour.

We need no Masters here in America, the foremost Country in the World in evolutionary development, spiritual and material. We need no more Hierarchies inside and outside the Church to strangle our spiritual development. But one thing we do need, a solid front and understanding of our own Spiritual Selves and Higher Natures that will eclipse all powers, all charms, all glamour and deception that these Devils of the Higher Realms have heretofore been able to cast over us, and that understanding will come unaided once you gain the Union I am speaking of: Union with your own Higher Self, the goal of an Independent Theosophist and the death knell of these GREAT MASTERS OF WISDOM, and that is the reason they don't want you to have it through your own perfect development, through self-reliance, individual responsibility and natural spiritual unfoldment.

The Hierarchy has ruled Theosophy since 1875 up until now—the Hierarchy shall rule no longer.

ADDENDUM:

Scratch out every name MASTER in the three books above mentioned, "Voice of the Silence," "Light on the Path," and "The Bhagavad Gita," and write on the margin of the page, "Higher Self," for they have changed the text in the original which formerly read "Higher Self."

Also, do not read or get your head into Madame Blavatsky's "Secret Doctrine," "Isis Unveiled," "Practical Occultism," written at the instigation and under the direction of these so-called Masters of Wisdom, for I have seen many, many cases of bright, promising T. S. students come to a standstill in their spiritual development once they got their minds into these works, for it magnetizes your aura, captures your vibration and henceforward *you fail to do your own thinking,* but think as others would have you think; a prisoner in their hands; an accepted pupil of the MASTERS; and a slave thereafter in the House of these Evil Spirits.

---

## THE APOCALYPSE UNSEALED

### Being an Esoteric Interpretation of the Revelation of St. John with a New Translation by James M. Pryse

A REVIEW

MR. JAMES M. PRYSE says in the Preface of his monumental work, "The Apocalypse Unsealed," "The translation of the Apocalypse here presented attempts no more than to reproduce the meaning of the original accurately and clearly in modern English. But while this translation differs radically in some respects from the authorized

version, the interpretation here offered is not based upon any peculiarities of the translator's work, or upon any mere matter of details, but rests broadly upon the undisputed meaning of the Greek text.

—James M. Pryse.

New York City, Sept., 1910.

On page 34 of "The Apocalypse Unsealed," Mr. Pryse says: "By sentimental literalists the Apocalypse is generally accepted as a record of visions actually seen by "the Seer of Patmos," although it requires but little discrimination to perceive that the visionary style is merely an artifice of the Apocalyptist, adopted for the purpose of introducing the fabulous characters of his drama and mystifying his readers. It is only the psychics, the *mystai* or "veiled ones" who see symbolical visions. The true seer, the *epoptes,* beholds the things of nature and of supra-nature as they really *are,* and not as they *seem;* perceiving that all the forms and processes of external nature are themselves but the shadowy symbols of the eternal Ideas of the intelligible world, he passes beyond this fabric of material and psychic glamour, this veil by which the True is covered and concealed and penetrates to the first principles of things, the archetypal, spiritual realities . . ."

Pp. 35. "Many actors, apparently play their parts in the drama of the *Apocalypse;* yet in reality there is but one performer—the neophyte himself, the sacrificial 'Lamb,' who awakens all the slumbering forces of his inner nature, passes through the terrible ordeals of the purifactory discipline and the telestic labors, and finally emerges as the Conqueror, the self-perfected Man who has regained his standing among the deathless Gods. He is the hero of, and the sole actor

in the drama; all the other *dramatis personae* are only personifications of the principles, faculties, forces and elements of Man, that minor world so vast and mysterious, whose ultimate destiny it is to become co-extensive with the divine and illimitable universe. . . ."

Pp. 60. "Thus the incarnated Logos is shown to bear a direct relation to the lowest centers. Now, it would be utterly impossible to elucidate the *Apocalypse* and ignore this delicate but perfectly pure subject, concerning which even the most communicative expositors of the esoteric philosophy have been extremely reticent; and so the present writer, being opposed to all undue secrecy, and believing that in this matter harm has resulted from the suppression of the truth, feels justified in dealing with the subject frankly and without constraint, though with necessary brevity. As every practical "pyrotechnist" knows the human brain contains certain centers or components, including the pituitary body and the conarium, the higher functions of which are almost completely dormant in the normal individuals of the present races of mankind, who are therefore termed in the *New Testament* and other esoteric writings "the dead"; yet it is only through these organs of the brain that the Spiritual Self of man, his overshadowing God, can act upon the consciousness of the psycho-intellectual self. This corpse-like condition of the finer organs of the brain does not preclude very high development of the ordinary intellectual faculties, apart from the epistemonic power; indeed, there are and always have been men who are lamentable examples of brilliant intellectuality combined with the densest spiritual stupidity. In the case of the true genius, the poet, artist, intutive philosopher, and religious mystic of saintly purity, there is a par-

tial awakening of these centers; while in the case of the seer (excluding from that class the mere psychic clairvoyant) the higher faculties are so quickened that he becomes cognizant of the interior worlds, the planes of true Being. But when the brain is fully restored to its true functions by the energizing of the *speirema*, the *parakletos* of the *New Testament*, that "Light of the Logos" which is literally the *creative force of the Logos*, then it, the brain, becomes an androgynous organ, wherein takes place the immaculate conception and gestation of the self-born spiritual man, the *monogenes*, who is in very truth "born from above." This is the process of regeneration and redemption which Ioannes sets forth both in the *Apocalypse* and the fourth Evangel, and which Paulos and the three Synoptists have written in large characters easily to be read by him who has "the single eye," and which is expressed by myth and symbol in all the great world-religions of antiquity. There being a direct and intimate relationship and correspondence between the sacred centers in the brain and the lower procreative centers, it follows that true spirituality can be attained only when a pure and virtuous life is led; while for the neophyte who would enter upon the telestic labor, the task of giving birth to oneself, perfect celebacy is the first and absolute prerequisite. Unless he is inspired by the loftiest aspiration, guided by the noblest philosophy, and restrained by the most rigid moral discipline, his possibility of success is extremely remote; and the mere dabbler in the pseudo-occult will only degrade his intellect with the puerilities of psychism, become the prey of the evil influences of the phantasmal world, or ruin his soul by the foul practices of phallic sorcery—as thousands of misguided

people are doing even in this age . . ."

Pp. 80. "The title makes Ioannes the one to be initiated (unless it is taken as merely indicating his authorship, which in the light of the text is hardly a reasonable supposition), while the sub-title gives Iesous as the candidate for initiation who emerges as the Conqueror after the telestic ordeals; for here, as in the Fourth Evangel, Ioannes and Iesous are but one individuality, Ioannes representing the incarnated man, and Iesous his noetic Self, whose "slave" the material man truly must become if he wills to reach the heights celestial. The Divinity who comes at the behest of Iesous is higher than Iesous himself; for he is the Logos, who in the initial vision makes his appearance as the "son of man" and remains throughout as the Hierophant, or Initiator, while Iesous is the candidate who is subject to the initiatory trials and has to do the perfecting works, whereby he finally becomes the Conqueror on the white horse—the new initiate in his solar body. The spiritual perfections have to be attained 'speedily' by sustained unremitting effort; yet, as time is regarded by those who look upon earth-life as an affair of but one incarnation, the telestic work would seem by no means expeditious, for it requires not less than seven incarnations of untiring effort before the final goal is reached. But the 'path' of the esotericist is indeed a short-cut, and his speedy journey, as compared with the progress of those who are content to follow the common highway of evolution, and who will reach their divine destination, their promised land, only after long ages of aimless wandering in the wilderness of terrestrial life . . ."

"It is the intuitive mind—"Anointed Iesous"—that gives evidence of the Logos to the neophyte, and he in

turn must, according to the law of the occult, transmit it to his fellowmen—who usually repay him with some form of physical or mental martyrdom.

Pp. 82. "The word *makarios* means much more than simply 'blessed.' To the man or woman who resolutely pursues the path of purity and devotion, there will come unfailingly this consciousness of immortality and spiritual calm; it is but a matter of centering the mind upon the deathless inner Self instead of upon the outer self that is under the sway of alternating death and birth. This mental reverting is the *menanoia* of the New Testament, not merely repentance, but 'changing the mind' from the mortal to the immortal mode of thought.

Pp. 96. "The attainment of spiritual knowledge is in effect the process of reviving the memory of the incarnating Ego in relation to the supernal worlds, before it became immured in matter; and this memory of things divine can be recalled only through the action of the *parakletos,* the regenerative force. Hence in this aspect the Nous is said to hold in its grasp the seven stars and to walk about among the seven little lampstands. According to Plato, all true knowledge is derived from the 'recollection of the things in which the God abides'; the immature souls, who cannot 'feed on the vision of truth,' fail of being 'initiated into the mysteries of Being, and are nourished with the food of opinion,' but 'he who employs aright these memories is ever being initiated into the perfect mysteries, and alone becomes perfect."

We do not doubt that Mr. Pryse is honest and well meaning in his rendition of the Apocalypse (as he sees it) and also employs English that is a credit to the translator; he being regarded as a Greek Scholar

of the first rank here in America. The work will have no attraction for the lay mind and only those scholars, thinkers, preachers and teachers who have themselves evolved to the point of treading the Path, living the life to know of the eternal doctrine will be drawn by it or enter into it in a partial degree.

Though I have a doubt that any one will question the work as Mr. Pryse presents it. First, because they are not familiar with Greek in its original, and second, because if they were they might not know whether what Mr. Pryse was giving out came from *within* his own knowledge or was mere heresay and second-hand information.

At any rate only the one who has evolved the *inner senses* of spiritual perception can review this work in the light of TRUTH and see whether what Mr. Pryse is giving out coincides with Mr. Pryse's own *spiritual status,* or whether he is misapplying his Greek in order to meet the demands of the translation which is being forced upon him.

Frankly, I doubt if Mr. Pryse has attained the *White-cap-stone* and mark of the Conqueror he depicts so cogently in this marvelous work, The Apocalypse. He says himself that it is not at all possible that any man may attain it in this life and only after seven lives of unremitting effort can a man hope to experience that lofty contact with the Solar Logos. Furthermore, he places the Solar Lord or Logos above Iesous and Ioannes, as if the Higher Self or Logos were any different than the crowned and anointed Iesous himself!

I doubt if Mr. Pryse wrote even the comments of his Apocalypse Unsealed, for I sense vividly and without conjecture or surmise that these "GREAT MAS-

TERS OF WISDOM" had as much to do with his rendition of his "Apocalypse Unsealed" as they had in the production of Madame Blavatsky's "Secret Doctrine," "Isis Unveiled," and other works written down by H. P. B. under their guidance.

Bear in mind when Mr. Pryse and Mr. G. R. S. Mead were associated with the Madame it was not as fellow searchers of TRUTH. They already had the TRUTH and were not searching for it. The MASTERS OF WISDOM were TRUTH all in all to them, and whenever the Madame received a Message from them, that was regarded as the *ipse dixit* of authority. No man must question what comes from the MASTERS any more than that no man should question what comes through GOD from one of his Apostles depicted in our own BIBLE. I ask, is this Theosophical? And reply, NO. I ask, is it any better than Catholicism? And again reply, NO.

I do not think, however, that Mr. Pryse as an occultist could very well portray this coming into Union with his own Higher Self when he tells me himself explicitly that it is not even possible that any man has ever attained (save these Masters of Wisdom) and only after seven succeeding births may he ever hope to aspire to reach these heights.

Now in the light of the foregoing I wish to ask, can an occultist who considers authority (of the Masters) outside himself as greater than the authority from within his own (Higher Self) be a safe and sure guide to lead the Neophyte into safe channels? I reply, NO. Mr. Pryse places much stress on the opening of the third eye that admits man into knowledge of the supernal worlds, and makes this teaching identical with UNION WITH THE HIGHER SELF.

He is simply and truly misleading the student to develop *occult faculties* that lead to other regions than the Higher Self. He says: "It is only the psychics, the *Mystai* or 'veiled ones,' who see symbolical visions. The true seer, the *epoptes,* behold the things of nature and of supra-nature as they really *are,* and not as they *seem.*" The Greek no doubt is correct in its translation; but, how far, may I ask, is Mr. Pryse following his own Greek when he sees visions of Masters, converses with them and accepts their messages as *bona fide?* That's the question.

The early admixture of Occultism and psychic groping with purely Theosophical teaching of natural spiritual unfoldment at the inception of the formation of the Theosophical Society is the main cause of the sad plight of the T. S. today to give out to the searcher of TRUTH a clear analysis and rendition of its principles. Those members in the so-called accredited Theosophical Societies usually see as the Leaders see and no further; they may differ in minor points and in secondary considerations, but in the main, belief in the MASTERS OF WISDOM is the back-bone and mainstay that holds them together under the Theosophical Banner! And this, dear reader, is just what deprives them of ever coming into THEOSOPHY.

### Theosophy Does Not Master

It does not compel; it simply leads you to become your own Master, your own Conqueror, and thereafter a teacher of Men leading others.

When Mr. Pryse mentions the deathless Gods and the bringing back into consciousness the memory of past lives, I have an implicit faith in my own criticism that he is *faking* in trying to make the layman believe that his rendition of the Apocalypse is true to

the original Greek and not based upon the peculiarities of the translator's work.

Mr. Pryse may be able to fool the many; but he can never fool the ONE.

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## THE REALITY OF JESUS

### The Supreme Question Before All Christians Today Is "How Seriously Can We Take Jesus?" If Our Religion Is Exhausted in What We Believe About Him, His Reality Is Lost in a Theological Fog.

By Raymond B. Blakney

WE reprint this article from "The Adult Bible Class Magazine" of November, 1929, published by the Congregational Publishing Society of Boston, Mass., which we think shows conclusively that the Orthodox denominations of the Christian Church are beginning to think about living the life to learn of the Eternal Doctrine; a Revolution of Orthodoxy; just the message which DIVINE LIFE has to offer them in the nature of Independent Theosophy, which throws such a brilliant light on the inner meaning of Jesus' teaching. Mr. Blakney sees the light and it is for his Congregational brethren to right about face and forsake the letter of the Gospels for their spiritual meaning. He says:

"It is difficult to write dispassionately about Jesus. Every juryman who judges Jesus finds himself prejudiced and in one sense this would indicate that the World feels the reality of the Founder of Christianity quite vividly. It is part of the test of true greatness that there is no third alternative to being either for or against the great man. Yet the prime question which

confronts all Christians in this modern day is raised in asking just what being 'for' Jesus means. We may assume without fear of serious challenge that being 'for' Jesus meant to the primitive Christians following him or imitating him as close as possible. As long as that was the fashion there could be little question of the reality of his person. To take his teachings with great seriousness, *to try to live them with some fidelity to his precepts, carried with it the surest test of any religious reality: the ability to overcome the world.* But memory plays fearful tricks. The researches of critical students of early Christian history rather make us feel that it is no longer Jesus whom we follow but rather some compound image of him, which has replaced the original memory of him that was in the minds of our spiritual forefathers.

"The history of Christology is fairly familiar. We read of how early Christians living in a still pagan Europe found it difficult to keep their conception of Jesus pure and standard. The cult of Mithra, for example, colored early Christianity and contributed the theology of being 'washed in the blood' of Jesus. It was far easier to go through the symbolism of a bloody baptism than to be spiritually like Jesus. It was far easier to worship the sacrifice of the mass than to be sacrificed in true imitation of the Master. In fact, after some centuries, his great goodness was deemed heavenly rather than earthly, a characteristic of deity hardly to be expected of human beings, and the tension of the Master's simple 'follow me' was evaporated into the theology of vicarious atonement. Jesus had done the impossible. It need not be done again except in symbol; and the sublime but difficult reality of the gospels faded.

The obfuscation of the reality of Jesus has been both theoretical and practical. Almost any of the historic creeds will illustrate my point sufficiently. They generally open with a statement of belief *in* God and *in* his son Jesus Christ and then continue with a variety of pseudo-historical statements *about* God and *about* Jesus which are no longer particularly pertinent to modern life. The creeds themselves tend to convey a sense of unreality to the modern mind. For it is one thing, for example, to believe *in* Jesus, and quite another thing to believe anything *about* him. Belief *in* Jesus is seen to involve action. Belief about Jesus is static and has a distinctly metaphysical air about it. Accepting the creeds to be statements of fact can make no real difference in the actual world of affairs, and what is more, I believe that they have done real harm in abstracting attention from the transformation of all life which Jesus intended. Right or wrong, if conventional Christianity were effective and its message real, revivals would disappear and preachers would be attended with a more lively interest than they now receive. The "power of Christ" is a well-worn phrase but even in Christian countries so many people have never seen it in action that it begins to grow a bit vague. Has the church anything to offer which can cope with modern industrial, social and economic sin? What has Christianity, as a formal and organized religion, done more than to emotionalize some of the best elements in a civilization of dubious future?

"It has long been recognized that Jesus intended the foundation of no new formal religion. As far as a formal religion could be serviceable, the Jewish synagogue served his purpose. The doubtful passage on which the Catholic church dogmatizes its position is

not very convincing in the light of the whole sweep of Jesus' teachings. Jesus had good reasons to doubt the efficacy of entrenched religious hierarchies in his program. He had felt and was to feel the full force of the conservatism of those in whom the power and responsibility of a great religious corporation was vested. It was no new church which he offered the world. It was simply *a new way of living* which took its roots, not in the world of appearances, but in the world of a deeper reality, which he called *the kingdom of heaven,* and which men had not heretofore perceived. It was a way of life which offered a necessary estrangement from the normal mode of living in this world, since its laws of action were so fundamentally opposed to what men of that day might have termed "common sense." If a man would save his life in that world of deeper reality, he must be ready to lose his life in this world of our senses. One was even warned not to exact the payment of debts, this both in the literal and in the figurative sense. And what was more incomprehensible still, the very instinct of self-preservation was to be sublimed into non-resistance of evil. No man who appreciated the beauty of the kingdom of Heaven could possibly have enough energy left after seeking it to amass a private material fortune. The heavenly life lived here on earth would be found to be quite exhausting. Rather, if a man found himself possessed of the goods to make such a fortune, he would at once sell them all to buy the pearl of greater price. And the necessary result of such a life, said Jesus, in effect, would not only be a more abundant life here, but a *deathless enjoyment of the reality of the heavenly Father's presence.*

The student who would rediscover the reality of

Jesus for himself is confronted in the synoptic gospels with some such statement as this. At once, his native common sense tells him that there must be some other way of interpreting those stringent requirements. Yet he remembers that by a somewhat literal reading of those gospels, early Christianity was able to demonstrate the reality of its power by actually transforming the Roman Empire. He knows that Christianity today does very little transforming, despite the urgent need of it. Clergy, high and low, have given him the alternative interpretation which says that these teachings of Jesus which are so disrupting in their effect must be understood as the goal or ideal towards which we work. They argue that if we have given up the "literal inspiration" of the Bible, why should we insist on taking Jesus literally? Why not adopt his spirit and let the details work out in God's good time? At least there is relaxation in that. But the literal acceptance of the gospels of Jesus on matters of principle is a very different sort of thing from the literal acceptance of the whole Bible in its statements of fact. Give up the principles and you have nothing left. Even the most liberal Christian demands some definite authority.

"Despite the level-headed counsels of the 'common sense' party, the search for the reality of Jesus must continue. We see clearly the possibility of life which is more good, more true and more beautiful than what we have. Jesus achieved it at the cost of his earthly life. Perhaps we are right in considering that price too high. If so we must be content to muddle through with what we have, lacking either the reality to command the transformation of the world or the power to achieve it. The world of physical science has given us an interesting example of how true men of science

are to the reality of their beliefs. For nearly two hundred years physics has been pursued from the point of view of Sir Isaac Newton. Almost suddenly, Newton's fundamental view proved to be bankrupt before the new discoveries. There has been little or no hesitation on the part of physicists to scrap the older view for one that could get results. It should be clearly understood that the work of Albert Einstein has not been merely a refinement of details but a thorough-going revolution to a much more inclusive and real standard point. If the older Christianity that is called orthodox has proved to be less capable than it should be, why is it not possible to revolutionize it too? Is the demand for reality less necessary to religion than to science?

"The criticisms of those who do not find the reality of Jesus in the possibility of following him literally are entirely in line with the history of Christianity. When Christianity represented the fresh impact of Jesus on the minds of his followers it was able to transform the Roman empire. But when it had won its victory the empire transformed it. Paul gave to Jesus' teachings the form of a religion. Greece contributed a philosophy which was badly needed for the practical purposes of dialectic. Rome contributed an organization modeled on its own successful political organization and then victory! But from this distance it looks very much like a victory in which the victor won by agreeing to forget, for the time being, at least, the more inconvenient of his demands. It was practical, but it merely pushed the real victory indefinitely into the future. The church became a follower rather than a leader and even today it is no easy part of the clergymen's duties to 'keep up with the times.' I im-

agine that were Jesus in the flesh with us on earth, the times would have to scramble to keep up with him. It would simply be a question as to who had the most important and fundamental reality to offer. *As it is, the reality of the Christian religion is buried in world politics.*

If a generalization is permissible for what it is worth, the Roman Catholic Church is distinctively Latin, because it is so well adapted to the racial temperaments of the Latins and their relatives. The Greek and Russian churches are correspondingly Balkan and Slavic, while the many varieties of the Protestant churches have struck their roots among the Nordic races. To expect such a Christianity to dominate the world is equivalent to expecting the world to become Latin, Greek, Slavic or Nordic. And one may judge from the contemporary expressions of oriental temper that the orient, at least, has no intention of doing any such thing. It has seen too clearly that any widespread acceptance of Christianity in its present form would involve acquiescence to the demands of the various types of imperialism, which it believes to be by far the more impressive features of Christian civilization.

"To walk into the innermost shrine of the Christian religion, the person who has accepted Jesus as the ideal or the God of his life, faces an intolerable dilemma. If Jesus is to be the sacred ideal of human personality, his precepts should be both desirable and possible. If his teachings are to be regarded impracticable for actual men, then why talk about believing in him? It was not his method to postpone action or acceptance. To believe in him would mean that one should see so clearly the reality and desirability of the kingdom of

heaven that one would at once forsake all and at least under-study the life of the Master. The dilemma is not in the least alleviated by attempting to explain that the world of today is so much more rigid and complicated than it was in Jesus' day. The crucifixion is merely the testimony of the fear of the Jews that Jesus might be a new and more terrible Samson who would pull down the pillars of the temple over their heads. High churchmanship has solved this difficulty very simply by saying that the layman shall leave the practical interpretation of the gospels to the church. But there is just where the difficulty lies. *It is the distinct misfortune of the church not to be in a position for independent interpretation.* She is now in the possession of so many scripts and purses that for the very necessity of filling them, her supporters require that she shall do nothing which will interfere with the social or economic system which made them possible. She cannot have her great cathedrals and expensive layouts on the mission field and simultaneously preach to men that salvation comes of literally following the Man of Galilee. She can only hope for his spirit without its inconoclastic effects. *But with this postponement of radical belief in Jesus, we have the abatement of power to overcome the world.* If we still say that the crux of Christianity lies in belief in Jesus, that statement is meaningless unless it carries with it a practical endorsement of his program. The reality of Jesus comes with the faith in him that means action.

Such an endorsement must carry with it stupendous consequences for our civilization, but what then? If we ultimately escape the death that comes in time to all racial systems, we shall be the first to do so. Even now, our system cracks under the strain of human

desire. We cry for the reality of his power that would still the tempest of war which continually threatens. We feel that Christians who believe in Jesus cannot murder either collectively or individually. His life illustrated the Socratic teaching that it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong. But the evil of the present economic system out of which war grows is just as easy to deduce from the gospels as the evil of war. The greed of reparations, the entanglements of great foreign investments, the possession of wealth which breeds envy and hatred, all of these are fundamentally condemned by the Master. The reality or the unreality of Jesus comes home to every one of us.

In each succeeding century of history, Christianity has interested men from various points of view distinctive of the epoch. It must be the task of the twentieth century Christian Church to discover how to take Jesus seriously. We may be sure that we do not yet know what it is to believe in him—to feel the irresistible urge of his personality, the reality that blots out all else. But we talk about the adventure."

From the foregoing we see Mr. Blakeney is making a weak effort to awaken his fellow members to action. And if he was himself sincere in taking Jesus seriously he would retire from his orthodox position and live the life that Jesus led, and leave all the beautiful talking to others. I for one think that most of these orthodox preachers know the true Gnostic teaching in their hearts, but as it so conflicts with modern day thought and action that it is not policy to advocate something that will take the very bread and butter out of their hands. This is the main cause of the total rejection of the Master Jesus in the light of the Christian Gospels. His reality is too strong and pun-

gent for their weak orthodox eyes, hence creeds, dogmas and ritual to suit the taste of the Worldly successful. But with the undoing of Orthodoxy and "living the life to know of the Eternal Doctrine" we have the solution of Mr. Blakney's troubles, for you cannot place new wine in old bottles.

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## THE IMMORTAL ABRAHAM

(*Dedicated to Abraham Lincoln*)

Bronze as the Immortal
He stands with bowed head,
A Master in the flesh,
From whence he departed
In pangs of agony.
Like one on Calvary's Hill,
He, too, gave of his own
That man might live
Throughout the ages
In Immortal bliss.

His consummate frame
Was pinned to the
Ship of State,
A slave manacled
To the oars of the Union;
High, like a towering mass,
He met the issues of the day unflinching;
Proud to be its head,
Bowed down with responsibilities and sorrow.
He gave his best to save the Nation
From the Powers of Darkness.

And when the end came
He reached a height
Never before reached by Man;

The vision and enthrallment of
A future Heaven precipitated
Here on Earth;
Where Abraham,
Father of us all,
Tasted of his Immortal heritage;
"The Earth and all there is in it,"
Was given him.

And from a dying form
He re-lit and animated
This mundane crest,
That today cannot long survive
Unless it pays due homage
To the mighty pillar
Which forms the foundation-stone
Of our Grand Republic.
Immortal in the Heavens,
And here on Earth,
When Abraham again
Shall come to birth.

And all the Regions of the Universe
United in one appeal,
To raise the Standard of the Commonweal;
A Son so brave and stalwart,
Tender, true,
Who paid the penalty
With dearest price,
To make Old Glory
Bright and New,
And usher in
The Reign of Sacrifice.

—Harry Edward Richeimer.

( *THE NEW ORDER OF AGES* )

## THE INDEPENDENT THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA,

NOW that the many thousands who have dropped out of The Theosophical Movement of 1875, as founded by Madam Blavatsky and Col. Olcott, and which has been carried forward by Annie Besant, are awakened to the real situation and see that there is no Salvation or Liberty to be acquired under the blighting influence of these two Catholic Leaders, ( Blavatsky and Besant, ) who preach Salvation and Liberation in future ages and not **here and now**, and who have wantonly led the sheep back into the Catholic fold, and have betrayed the trust imposed in them of carrying forward a Theosophical Movement based on inward spiritual truths, which free the seeker from the outward habiliments of forms, ceremonies, symbols and occult influences, which retard and defeat the Doctrine of the Heart, which finds its apotheosis in natural spiritual development, giving supreme authority to the individual himself, in contradistinction to the doctrines of the Roman Church which place a Priest and a Hierarchical Ladder of Supreme Heads between Man and his inmost Spirit, thereby robbing him of self-reliance and self-dependence, and making him the play of outward Masters and forces, against the injunction of Jesus of Nazareth, "Call no man your Master, for one is you Master, even the Spirit within you our own Higher Self, the time has arrived to launch

# The Great Independent Theosophical Movement

INDEPENDENT of Madame Blavatsky, Annie Besant, and all the hosts of unseen dark entities which have served them in changing Theosophy into Catholicism,

The call has gone forth to organize and establish lodges and societies in every town city and state in these United States, and through the intermediate of literature and lectures, bring about the co-ordination of the Protestant elements in America, and establish a nucleus for the influx of the Spirit from on High to again visit us, and bring the Spirit of the—AMERICAN REPUBLIC—forward as the saving and redeeming grace of a Humanity who look to AMERICA and its Spiritual ones for the Salvation of the Race and the Redemption of the World !

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